

Administration of Barack Obama, 2015

Statement on World Refugee Day

June 19, 2015

Tomorrow, on World Refugee Day, we will pause to reflect on the millions around the world who have been displaced from their homes: the hardships they face, the courage and resilience they demonstrate, and the dedication of those who come to their aid.

This year's commemoration comes as worldwide displacement reaches record levels, with nearly 60 million people uprooted by wars, violence, and persecution. From Syria to Iraq, from Burma to Burundi, from South Sudan to eastern Ukraine, the number of displaced and vulnerable has escalated. The struggles of some are captured in searing images—of people waiting at border crossings, housed in endless lines of tents, and crammed into rickety boats at sea—while those of others, crowded into the shadows of large cities, may go unobserved.

World Refugee Day is a solemn occasion for the United States to join our partners in the international community in recognizing the dignity, value, and potential of every one of these lives. It is a time to recall this Nation's proud tradition of providing support to those who are most vulnerable and a moment to challenge ourselves to continue being as generous and resourceful as we can in meeting their needs.

As the largest global donor of humanitarian aid, the United States supports programs that provide food, water, shelter, and medical care to refugees and other displaced persons. We thank the aid workers who deliver this assistance, sometimes at great personal risk, and we offer our gratitude to the many families who open their homes to those in need. All the while, we express our appreciation for the millions of men and women who, having endured the struggles of displacement, have contributed so much to the life of this Nation.

Categories: Statements by the President : World Refugee Day.

Subjects: Burma: Political unrest and violence; Burundi: Political unrest and violence; Foreign policy, U.S : Humanitarian assistance programs; Holidays and special observances : World Refugee Day; Immigration and naturalization : Refugees; Iraq: Political unrest and violence; South Sudan: Political unrest and violence; Syria : Political unrest and violence; Ukraine: Political unrest and violence.

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